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for

November, 1939

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Vol. II

Record Reviews for November, 1939

No. 11

Auber: *Crown Diamonds*—Overture. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Constant Lambert. 2 sides 12" imported disc, No. G-C3071, price \$2.00.

Crown Diamonds was one of the most successful of the many Auber light operas. This is the first time that the overture has had an adequate recording. The music is of no great moment but the light and deft touches of the composer's writing have given us a very tuneful and charming work. The playing, interpretation, and direction are all that one could wish for and the recording is excellent.

BACH

Bach, J. S.: *Die Kunst der Fuge*. Professor Hermann Diener and members of his College of Music. 20 sides, 10-12" imported discs, Nos. G-EH1007-16, price \$20.00 the set.

Bach's *Art of the Fugue* has been available on CM-206 in a very fine and able transcription by Roy Harris and Mrs. M. D. H. Norton by the Roth String Quartet. The best known version is that of Graeser's superb orchestral transcription, but unfortunately not recorded. Professor Diener's discs do not state what version is used but it differs from both the Graeser version and the Peters edition of the work. The sequence on the discs is as follows:

First Disc—Fugues 1 to 4 simple fugues on the "Motto"

Second Disc—Theme.

Third Disc—Fugues 18 (four-part "Mirror" fugue) and 12 (canon at octave).

Fourth Disc—Fugues 13 (canon at twelfth), 14 (canon at tenth).

Fifth Disc—Fugues 15 (canon at octave), 16 (three-part "Mirror" fugue with the "inversus" played first).

Sixth Disc—Fugues 5 and 6 (stretto-fugues).

Seventh Disc—Fugues 7 (stretto-fugue), 9 (double fugue at the twelfth).

Eighth Disc—Fugues 10 (double fugue at the tenth), 8 (triple fugue at the octave).

Ninth Disc—Fugue 11 (triple fugue—two sides).

Tenth Disc—Fugue 19 (quadruple fugue—two sides). (Fugue 17 is omitted as it is an arrangement by Bach of No. 16 for four hands on two cembali with additional free parts).

We may miss some of the color and contrast of Graeser's orchestral arrangement, in which some of the numbers are given to the organ and to the harpsichord, but we have a most musical and well recorded performance. It is a very restrained performance more so than that of the Roths: but it is never dull. We might like more expressiveness in the slow fugues, but there is no lack of animation in the quick numbers, and the fugal entries are clear. We found the treatment of the last number arresting. The deliberate scaling down in tone to the abrupt stop which indicates the place where Bach left the music unfinished is most effective.

Good recording and excellent playing make this set a "must" for Bachians.

Bach, J. S.: *Sonata No. 3, in G Minor*. Ernst Victor Wolff (harpsichord) and Janos Scholz (viola da Gamba). 4 sides, 2-12" discs, Nos. C-69720/1D in CM-X147, price complete with album \$3.50.

Continuing the series begun by Mr. Wolff and Mr. Scholz in October 1938, this present set brings the series of three Sonatas for harpsichord and viola da gamba to a conclusion. The playing and recording is all that could be desired. Mr. Scholz's lovely tone and the expert musicianship of Mr. Wolff combine again in a noteworthy set.

Bach, J. S.: *Toccatas and Fugues*. Carl Weinrich (organ). 8 sides, 4-12" discs, Nos. MC-1116/9 in MC-36, price complete with album \$6.50.

The very fine series of discs which Mr. Weinrich and Musicraft have given us are in fact surpassed by these new ones on the new *Praetorius* organ of the Westminster Choir College of Princeton, N. J. During the summer this new organ was installed and the present set of magnificent discs is the result. Built after much study and research this organ is closely patterned after those described by *Praetorius* in his *Syntagma Musicum* published in 1619.

The selections played in this set are: *Toccata and Fugue in D Minor*; *Toccata in F Major*; *Fugue in F Major*; and *Toccata (with two fugues) in E Major*. All are played with fine musicianship by Weinrich and the recording is superb.

An excellent book of notes by Gerhard Herz accompanies the set.

Bach, K. P. E.: *Sonata in A Minor (No. 1 from the Württemberg Sonatas)* (3 sides) & *Handel: Fantasia in A Minor (No. 6 from Third Collection for the Harpsichord)* (1 side). Yella Pessl (harpsichord). 2-12" discs, Nos. V-15640/1 in VM-606, price complete with album \$4.50.

In 1744 Bach published six sonatas dedicated to the Duke of Württemberg, hence the name by which they are known. Musically they are very important for they asserted a great influence upon the young Haydn. The divisions of the work is as follows: *Moderato*; *Andante*; *Allegro assai*, of which in the last the listener becomes aware of the emergence of a new style. The *Fantasia in A Minor* which completes the album, is taken from the third collection of compositions (lessons) for the harpsichord by Handel. It is the 6th Lesson in this compilation.

The recording is good and Miss Pessl plays in a restrained manner.

Bach, J. C.: *Concerto in G Major, Op. 7, No. 6.* Marguerite Roesgen-Champion (harpsichord) with Bornschwak and Perlmutter (violins) and Pascal (cello). 4 sides, 2-10" discs, Nos. V-4441/2, price \$2.00 the pair.

This delightful little concerto by the "London" Bach, as Johann Christian came to be known, is in three movements: *Allegro*; *Andante*; and *Allegretto*, the second and third movements taking one side each while the *Allegro* fills the first disc. It is a gay and tuneful work, and it is believed that Mozart was influenced by Johann Christian's style. This recording was originally listed in the *Encyclopedia of Recorded Music* by the original French H.M.V. numbers, G-K6423/4.

The recording is excellent and the artists play with élan. The fidelity of tone of each instrument can well serve as a model for some of the newer releases. A pair of discs of outstanding merit.

BEETHOVEN

Beethoven: *Adagio, Variations and Rondo for piano, violin and cello on "Ich bin der Schneider Kakadu," Op. 121a.* Messers Lund Christiansen, Erling Bloch,

and Torben Svendsen of the Danish Quartet. 4 sides, 2-12" discs, Nos. G-DB5229/30, price \$5.00 the pair. Here we have a charming work well off the beaten track. These variations Bekker says, "form a companion piece of a smaller scale to the *Diabelli* variations, and though they lack the deep humorous insight and vast range of the later, they are full of charming enthusiasm and keenness, with witty surprises and delicate sarcastic changes in store for the hearer." The recording and interpretation of this work is excellent. The piano tone is brilliant and the balance of the instruments is well maintained. A pair of discs very highly recommended.

Beethoven: *Septet in E-flat Major (for violin, viola, cello, string bass, clarinet, bassoon, and horn), Op. 20.* A Catterall, B Schore, A Gauntlett, E. Crut, F. Thurston, A. Camden, A. Thonger. 10 sides, 5-12" discs, Nos. V-12450/4 in VM-571, price complete with album, \$7.50.

This early septet of Beethoven is his most successful attempt at writing for unusual chamber music combinations. This work made such a favorable impression when it was first performed and became so talked about that Beethoven, conscious of its limitations, never composed in this medium again for wind instruments. It is not one of his most inspired compositions, but it abounds with a profusion of melodies, and it is noted for the complete skill and success with which this risky group of instruments is handled.

The recording is good, and surpasses the old version by the Léner quartet and wind-players (CM-180). The hard tone of the violin tends to give this instrument undue prominence, but despite this we have a well played and recorded addition to the chamber music lists.

Beethoven: *Trio (Violin, Viola, Cello) No. 2, in G Major, Op. 9, No. 1.* The Pasquier Trio. 6 sides, 3-12" discs, Nos. C-P69714/6D in CM-384, price complete with album \$5.00.

This Trio in G Major, written about 1797, is in four movements: *Adagio-Allegro con brio* (2 sides); *Adagio e cantabile* (2 sides); *Scherzo* (1 side); and *Finale, Presto* (1 side). Masterfully written and abounding in interesting and poetical content, we find this a much better version than that of the Messers Neikrug and Mara Sebriansky (MC-28). The playing and interpretation is beautiful throughout.

Beethoven: *Variations on a theme by Mozart "La ci darem la mano" (Don Giovanni).* Lois Wann, Ferdinand Prior (oboes) and Engelbert Brenner (English horn). 4 sides, 2-10" discs, Nos. MC-228/9 in MC-34, price complete with album \$2.50.

These delightful variations for which Beethoven had a special fondness, have had a curious history. Composed in 1795 and performed publically for the first time at a charity concert on December 23, 1797, they do not appear in *Breitkopf und Härtel*, although Thayer and Riemann speak about them. Very similar in style and treatment to

the other variations which Beethoven wrote, they make excellent listening and Musicraft deserves a vote of thanks for this excellent and unusual contribution to the lists. Played excellently, and recorded with the utmost fidelity, here, we have a set which will enchant the discriminating record buyer.

Benedict: La Capinera. See under **Collections, Lily Pons in Song.**

Boyce: The Power of Music. See **Smith: Miniature Suite.**

BRAHMS

Brahms: Piano Quintet in F Minor, Op. 34. Rudolf Serkin (piano) and the Busch Quartet. 10 sides, 5-12" discs. Nos. V-15646/50 in VM-607, price complete with album \$10.00.

The history of this Quintet is interesting. Originally written as a string quintet later it was revised as a duet for two pianos, however upon the advice of his friend Hermann Levi, Brahms again rewrote it in its present form. Levi, after receiving the score, wrote to Brahms: "You have turned a monotonous work for two pianos into a thing of great beauty, a masterpiece of chamber music the like of which we have not seen since 1828." (That was the year in which Schubert wrote the great String Quintet in C Major, and also the year of his death). Final retouchings delayed publication until 1865. The final form is notable for its spontaneity, sincerity, and wholeness and bears none of the marks of the long and painful reconstruction. There are four movements: *Allegro non troppo* (3 sides), *Andante, un poco Adagio* (2 sides); *Scherzo* (2 sides), and *Finale, Poco sostenuto-Allegro non troppo* (3 sides).

There have been two versions in the past of this work. Harold Bauer and the Flonzaley Quartet recorded it in 1927 in a beautifully played version (VM-10) which is still available, and Olga Loeser-Lebert and the Léner Quartet in (CM-80) also available. However these early recordings do not stand comparison either technically or artistically with this new version. The Busch Quartet and Serkin give us a sincere and deeply felt reading of the work. This is an excellent full-toned recording capturing with fidelity the instruments, especially the timbre of the viola, and the lovely tone of the pianist. A recording recommended without reservation.

Brahms: Symphony No. 1, in C Minor, Op. 68. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 10 sides, 5-12" discs, Nos. C-69704/8D in CM-383, price complete with album \$7.50.

This version of Brahms' First is an excellent recording and no doubt is destined to replace the older version by the same conductor and the Royal Philharmonic (CM-103). The advance in recording technique is notable, the strings in this new version have a bite without coarseness, while the winds are more ethereal. The interpretation remains the same, with the beautiful rhythm preserved.

We find this version to be superior to either Walter Vienna Philharmonic (VM-470), Stokowski-Philadelphia

(VM-301), or Klemperer-Philharmonic (D-25487/92). Unfortunately the Jochum reading with the Berlin Philharmonic (T-E2703/7) is not at hand to make comparisons for it is noted for several excellencies.

Weingartner gives us an excellent reading with some very fine recording.

BRUCKNER

Bruckner: Mass No. 2, in E Minor. Aachen Cathedral Choir (in Latin) and Wind Players of the Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Th. B. Rehmann. 12 sides, 6-12" discs, Nos. V-15583/8 in VM-596, price complete with album \$12.00.

Originally available on the imported pressings (G-DB4525/30), domestic Brucknerites will thank Victor for adding this set to their *Connoisseur's List*. The divisions of the work is as follows: *Kyrie* (2 sides); *Gloria* (2 sides); *Credo* (3 sides); *Sanctus* (1 side); *Benedictus* (2 sides); *Agnus Dei* (2 sides).

This recording is remarkable for its clarity and brilliance. Previously there had been an inadequately recorded version by the Liebfrauen Church Choir of Zurich by the Christschall Company. Another version by the Choir and Orchestra of the Hamburg State Opera (T-E2607/11), though slightly cut, is to our mind more interesting; there is more clarity and definition and while the singing may be of operatic rather than church caliber the tone is more forward and round. The Aachen Choir sounds as though the recording was made in a studio while the Hamburg discs have just enough room resonance to give the effect of a Cathedral. The work itself is interesting especially since the scoring calls for no strings, only wind and brass instruments. This absence of strings tends to enhance the solemnity and grandure of the work.

Brucknerites will not cavil over the tonal differences but will, no doubt, prefer the uncut version. The playing of the winds and the balance with the choir is excellent, and note must be made of the varied choral effects achieved by the director.

Busoni: Sonatina—"Ad Usum Infantis" & Mozart: Serenade (Don Giovanni) (arr. Busoni). Egon Petri (piano). 12" disc, No. C-69736D, price \$1.50. The Sonatina is in five short movements. The sub-title "ad usum infantis Madeline M. Americanae pro clavicembalo composita." Busoni's arrangement of, *Deh vieni alla finestra* fills this beautifully played and recorded disc.

Buxtehude: Chaconne in E Minor (Orchestrated by Chávez). See under **Collections: Music of Chávez.**

Carrillo: Preludio a Cristobal Colon. 13th Sound Ensemble of Havana directed by Angel Reves. 12" disc, No. C-7357M, price \$1.25.

A re-listing of C-5115M. A disc of utmost importance to those who are interested in the unusual music.

Chadwick: Jubilee (No. 1 from "Symphonic Sketches Suite"). See under **Collections American Music for Orchestra.**

CHARPENTIER

Charpentier: A Mules (after "Impressions d'Italie") & **Les Chevaux de Bois**. Jean Planel (tenor) in French with orchestra conducted by the composer. 2 sides, 12" disc, No. C-P69734D, price \$1.50.

Gustave Charpentier has adapted one section of his Suite — *Impressions d'Italie*, and under his direction Jean Planel and a chorus of women's voices have given us an excellent version of it. Coupled with a setting of a poem of Verlaine with some tricky orchestration, we have a disc of superior merit. Formerly available on PAT-PAT26 this disc will gain many admirers for the great art of Jean Planel, a singer of rare intelligence and taste.

Chávez: Sinfonia India. See under Collections: *Music of Chávez*.

Chávez: Sinfonia de Antigona. See under Collections: *Music of Chávez*.

Corelli: Concerto Grosso in G Minor, Op. 6, No. 8 (The Christmas Concerto). London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 4 sides, 2-12" imported discs, Nos. G-DB3639/40 price \$5.00 the pair.

An excellent version of this popular and melodious work. The Orchestra under Bruno Walter gives us a clean and full recording with a good balance. The nine sections are all included in this, which is the best of the available versions.

Debussy: Green (No. 5 from "Ariettes Oubliées"). See under Collections *Lily Pons in Song*.

Debussy: Mandonline. See under Collections *Lily Pons in Song*.

Debussy: Préludes—Book II. Walter Gieseking (piano). 12 sides, 6-10" discs, Nos. C-17163/8D in CM-382, price complete with album \$6.00.

Gieseking—Debussy. It is futile to waste words and space over such excellence. The conception and interpretation of this artist gives us, on discs, a most magnificent Second Book of Préludes in its entirety for the first time. (Nos. 13, 16 and 23 making their gramophonic debuts.) The second set has as its individual numbers: 13, *Brouillards*; 14, *Feuilles mortes*; 15, *La Puerta del Vino*; 16, *Les Fées sont d'Exquises danseuses*; 17, *Bruyères*; 18, *General Lavine — eccentric*; 19, *La Terrasse des audiences au dair de lune*; 20, *Ondine*; 21, *Hommage à S. Pickwick, Esq., P. P. M. P. C.*; 22, *Canope*; 23, *Les Tierces alternées*; 24, *Feux d'artifice*.

Excellent in every way.

Delibes: Les Filles de Cadix. See under Collections *Lily Pons in Song*.

Dell'Acqua: Villanelle. See under Collections—*Lily Pons in Song*.

D'India: Lagrimo occhi miei. See *Monteverdi: Aria—Maladetto*.

FAURE

Fauré: Nocturne in F. Major, Op. 33, No. 3. See reverse side of *Poulenc: Mouvements Perpétuels*.

Fauré: Quartet (Piano and Strings) No. 1, in C Minor, Op. 15. Elaine Zurfluh-Tenroc (piano), Henri Merckel (violin), Alice Merckel (viola), and Gaston Marchesini (cello). 8 sides, 4-12" discs, Nos. V-12181/4, in VM-594, price complete with album \$6.50.

Gabriel Urbain Fauré (1845-1924), one of France's best but less known composers as far as America is concerned, is represented on the *Connoisseur List* by this very beautiful work written when he was thirty-four. The work is a mature expression, although it is numbered the first, for this difficult combination of instruments. There are four movements: *Allegro molto moderato*; *Allegro vivo*; *Adagio*; *Allegro molto*, with the opening theme setting the tenor of the entire work. As you will see the andante follows the scherzo and immediately precedes the finale. The scherzo with its fluid rhythms, tempers the austerity of the allegro, and prepares for the meditation of the slow movement; then, after this peaceful oasis, the tumult begins again with renewed ardor.

The recording, while not new is excellent, and the interpretation leaves nothing to be desired. A well recommended addition for your library of chamber music.

Fauré: Les Roses d'Ispahan. See under Collections *Lily Pons in Song*.

Foulds: Keltic Lament. See reverse side of *Williams: Greensleeves—Fantasia*.

Franz: Im Herbst. See reverse side of *Schubert: Im Abendrot*.

GOLDMARK

Goldmark: Rustic Wedding Symphony, Op. 26. Columbia Broadcasting Symphony conducted by Howard Barlow. 10 sides, 5-12" discs, Nos. C-69722/6D in CM-385, price complete with album \$7.50.

The *Rustic Wedding Symphony* of Goldmark (1830-1915) is, strictly speaking, not a symphony. A better description would be perhaps a suite; illustrative of the program inferred by the title. First performed in Vienna in 1876, under the baton of Hans Richter, and within the year Dr. Leopold Damrosch gave this work its first American performance. The work is tuneful and the composer's rich melodic inventions and skillful manipulation of the thematic material are noteworthy.

Mr. Barlow's interpretation of the score is excellent: he has caught the gay and festive mood of the work and has effectively transmitted it to the orchestra, while the more fanciful parts have not eluded him either.

The recording is excellent. This orchestra, which has given us so many fine recording without the benefit of the press, continues to improve and judging from these discs is the best house orchestra devoting itself to recording. There is, in this set, an excellent balance with good string tone and a fine definition.

Griffes: *The White Peacock*, Op. 7, No. 1. See under Collections American Music for Orchestra.

HANDEL

Handel: *Fantasia in A Minor*. See K. P. E. Bach: *Sonata in A Minor*.

Handel: *Sonata for two Flutes*. See reverse side of Neubauer: *Adagio for Flute and Viola*.

Handel: *Suites*—No. 2, in F Major; No. 5, in E Major; No. 7, in G Minor; No. 10, in D Minor; No. 14, in G Major. Wanda Landowska (harpsichord). 12 sides, 6-12" discs, Nos. V-15550/5 in VM-592, price complete with album \$12.00.

Originally issued abroad in 1936 in a limited edition, this volume of discs is magnificently played by Landowska. Suites Numbers 2, 5, and 7 are from the first volume of harpsichord suites published in 1720, while the remaining two, Numbers 10 and 14, are from the second volume published in 1733. The air and variations in Suite No. 5, you will recognize as the *Harmonious Blacksmith*, a misnomer if there ever was one. The suites from Volume I were published as *Suites de Pièces pour le Clavecin*, and prefaced by the following note by Handel: "I have been obliged to publish some of the following Lessons, because Surreptitious and incorrect Copies of them had got Abroad. I have added several new ones to make the Work more useful, which if it meets with a favourable Reception; I will Still proceed to publish more, reckoning it my duty, with my Small Talent, to serve a Nation from which I have received so Generous a Protection."

The interpretations and playing of Mme. Landowska makes this a very attractive album and the recording is most satisfactory.

HAYDN

Haydn: *Quartets*—B-flats Major, Op. 1, No. 1; E-flat Major, Op. 20, No. 1; B-flat Major, Op. 55, No. 3; B-flat Major ("Sunrise"), Op. 76, No. 4. Pro Arte Quartet. 14 sides, 7-12" discs, Nos. V-15569/75 in VM-595, price complete with album \$14.00.

This marks the domestic release of Volume VIII of the Haydn String Quartet Society. Played perfectly by the Pro Arte Quartet. The recording is flawless and the fidelity of the instrumental tone gives us this group right in our room.

The choice of quartets is most satisfactory. The historical significance of Op. 1, is a truly representative beginning. The happy and gracious work from Op. 20, sometimes known as the Sun Quartets has an immediate appeal due to its subtle refinement. In Op. 50, No. 3, we have mixed emotions; the first two dark, while the third and fourth are more cheerful and gay. The concluding quartet in this set is Op. 76, No. 4, one of the greatest and best known of Haydn's works. There is a cut in the *Adagio* which enables

the work to go on two discs, and unfortunately this cut does lose the effect of an important contrast. An old version of this work by the International Quartet (NGS) has been long out of print. As stated above the excellent recording and magnificent playing in this set places it definitely on the "must" list.

Haydn: *Symphony No. 92 in G Major*, ("Oxford").

Paris Conservatoire Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 6 sides, 3-12" imported discs, Nos. G-DB-3559/61, price \$7.50 the set.

Commissioned by the Concerts Spirituels of Paris, this symphony was composed about 1788. Later when Haydn was invited to Oxford to receive the honorary degree of Doctor of Music, a series of three concerts was given and this symphony was played at the second of these. Since then the name "Oxford" has been the identification of the work. There are four movements: *Adagio-Allegro spiritoso*; *Adagio*; *Menuetto (Allegretto)* and *Trio*; *Presto*.

This work has been recorded before by the London Symphony conducted by Weisbach (VM-139) and while the interpretation was good the recording left a great deal to be desired. In the present version we have a magnificent performance by Walter and his Paris players. The recording is excellent with a good range of dynamics and an unusual definition with a lovely string tone.

Haydn: *Symphony No. 96 in D Major* (Salomon No.

6). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 6 sides, 3-12" imported discs, Nos. G-DB3282/4, price \$7.50 the set.

This is the only recording of this symphony obtainable. The discs were issued in England in November of 1937 and only now have they become available for American music lovers. This is a genial work well played and recorded. There is the reverberation of the Singakademie to contend with but despite its persistence, the recording has been well accomplished. There is the beautiful tone of the orchestra which together with the detail and clarity are all that one could ask for.

The usual four movements are: *Adagio-Allegro*; *Andante*; *Menuetto (Allegretto)* and *Trio*; *Vivace assai*.

An addition to the recorded Haydn literature which we are pleased to recommend.

Haydn: *Symphony No. 104 in D Major* ("London").

Edwin Fischer Chamber Orchestra conducted by Edwin Fischer. 6 sides, 3-12" imported discs, Nos. G-DB4615/7, price \$7.50 the set.

The first performance of this work took place at the King's Theatre on May 4th, 1795, at a benefit concert for Haydn. This symphony is numbered as the seventh of the Salomon set; but according to a note on the manuscript, it is actually the last of the twelve composed in England. This is a work of more serious nature than the other Haydn symphonies listed in this Supplement. The theme, which opens the finale is an old Croatian folk-tune and because of the resemblance to a carillon, the name "Bell"

is also associated with this symphony. The movements are: *Adagio Allegro*; *Andante*; *Menuetto*; *Allegro spiritoso*. The last recording of this work was in 1929, so this version is without a rival. The performance is not as good as we had hoped for; Fischer and his orchestra give us a reading which is not as vital nor as vigorous as we would expect. The string tone, while generally good is not as clear in the slow movement, but in the finale there is considerable improvement.

A recording which fills a long felt gap but one which we recommend with reservations.

HINDEMITH

Hindemith: Sonata No. 3 for Viola and Piano (1939). Paul Hindemith and Jesus Maria Sanromá. 7 sides, 4-10" discs, Nos. V-1987/90-S in VM-572, price complete with album \$5.75.

Mr. Hindemith composed this sonata for the New York Town Hall recital of April 23, 1939. There is little to be said for this composition as even the most dyed-in-the-wool admirer of Hindemith will admit readily that this is one of his less inspired works. The performance is, to say the least, authoritative. The composer playing the viola and Sanromá assisting at the piano. The recording is excellent with a good balance between the two instruments and the tone of each has been caught with fidelity.

However, we feel, that a composer of Hindemith's stature might be better represented on the Victor lists than this. Now, there is a need for a good recording that can be easily obtained of *Mathis, der Maler*, and of course the score which he composed for the *Ballets Russes*, and as symphonic writing is so excellent—*St. Francis*, would be a most gratifying addition.

Hindemith: Trauermusik. Paul Hindemith (viola) with String Orchestra conducted by Bruno Reibold. 12" disc, No. V-15643, price \$2.00.

Commissioned by the B.B.C. upon the death of King George V, this profoundly moving work is divided as follows: *Lento*; *Ruhig bewegt*; *Lebhaft*; *Choral*—“*Für deinen Thron tret ich hiermit*”. Hindemith's great admiration for the late King is ably demonstrated, not only, by this superb composition, but also, by his beautiful playing of the solo part. The recording is excellent and the warm tone of the viola has been captured in a life-like manner. The supporting string orchestra is ably conducted by Mr. Reibold.

Hue A des Oiseaux. See under Collections *Lily Pons in Song*.

Ivanovici: Danube Waves — Waltz. Boston “Pops” Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-12510, price \$1.50.

An excellent version of this popular tune. The recording and interpretation have a lilt that is infectious. The orchestration used is that of *Waldteufel*.

Kennan: Night Soliloquy. See under Collections *American Music for Orchestra*.

Levitzki: Valse in A Major & Arabesque Valsante. Mischa Levitzki (piano). 10" disc, No. V-2008, price \$1.50.

Mischa Levitzki playing two of his own compositions in a most engaging manner. The piano tone is well recorded and this will make a nice addition to your “encore” list.

Liadow: Une Tablatière à Musique. See under Collections *Lily Pons in Song*.

Liszt: Comment Disaient-ils? See under Collections *Lily Pons in Song*.

Liszt: Hungarian Fantasia (for Piano and Orchestra). Winfried Wolf and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Weisbach. 4 sides, 2-12" imported discs, Nos. G-EH1209/10, price \$4.00 the pair.

The popular old war-horse receives a good performance on these discs; but not as good an interpretation as Klyenzi and the Grand Orchestre of Paris (CM-X120) gave it. This, as you know, is Liszt's own arrangement of his 14th Rhapsody “Mohac's Field”, for piano and orchestra.

The recording is good, with a good tone and balance, but we feel that the Klyenzi version is superior both as to interpretation and recording.

Liszt: Selected Songs. Ernst Wolff (baritone) accompanying himself at the piano. 4 sides, 2-12" discs, Nos. C-69732/3D in CM-X148, price complete with album \$3.50.

This album contains the following songs of Liszt: *Freudvoll und Leidvoll*; *Es muss ein Wunderbares sein* & *Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh'*; *Wie Singt die Lerche schön* (C-69732D)

Im Rhein, im schönen Strom; *Morgens steh' ich auf und frage* & *Der du von dem Himmel bist; Anfangs wollt' ich fast verzagen* (C-69733S)

Out of the eight selections recorded here, Mr. Wolff gives us five “firsts”. Pleasantly sung with good accompaniments this is a good set, but not outstanding. The songs which have had previous recorded performances are: *Freudvoll und Leidvoll*; *Es muss ein Wunderbares sein*; and *Im Rhein, im schönen Strom*.

McDowell: Suite No. 2, “Indian”, Op. 48 — Dirge. See under Collections *American Music for Orchestra*.

Monteverdi: Aria—Maladetto; Madrigal—Chiome d'oro & D'India; Aria—Lagrimo occhi miei; Monteverdi: Madrigal—Ohimè dov'è il mio ben. Maria Castelazzi (soprano) and Leila Ben Sedira (contralto) with “Ars Rediviva”, conducted by Claude Crussard, 12" disc, No. V-15466, price \$2.00.

This disc offers a collection of sixteenth century airs and madrigals sung by two voices from the Opéra Comique

and accompanied by a group of musicians calling themselves the "Ars Rediviva". Beautifully sung and accompanied this disc will make a valuable addition to the library of those interested in the older and simpler forms of music. The recording is very clear and this disc was formerly available on our imported list as G-DB5024.

Sigismondo d'India was born at Palermo at the close of the sixteenth century and composed a number of madrigals, motets and similar works.

MOZART

Mozart: Cosi Fan Tutti—Overture. (1 side) & **Brahms: Hungarian Dances—No. 19 in B Minor; No. 20 in E Minor; No. 21 in E Minor (arr. Dvorak).** The B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 12" imported disc, No. G-DB3814, price \$2.50.

We greet this disc with mixed feelings. As a recorded performance it is very fine; but on interpretative grounds both selections are on the short side. The best version of the Overture is that by the Berlin Philharmonic conducted by Schmidt-Isserstedt ((T-E2522) which is coupled with an equally good performance of the overture to *Die Entführung*. The Hungarian Dances are played with true British reserve, and do not make quite as good listening as they did on the Minneapolis Symphony disc, which was conducted by Ormandy (V-1796). However, allowing for interpretation, the recording is excellent.

Mozart: Divertimento No. 10, in F Major (Strings and two horns), K. 247. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 6 sides, 2-10" and 1-12" discs, Nos. V-2014/5 & 15639 in VM-603, price complete with album \$5.50.

The strings of the Philadelphians with horns in a not very inspired reading of this delightful work. The tone of the large body of instruments, while in the concert hall may be advantageous, only tends to muffle the line and make the music needlessly heavy.

So many times we hear the cry about the high cost of recording, so while we are not looking a gift-horse in the mouth, this "first" might have been done with the proper number of instruments and without cuts.

Mozart: Divertimento No. 17, in D Major (Strings and Horns), K. 334. Léner String Quartet with Aubrey and Dennis Bain. 10 sides, 5-12" discs, Nos. C-69694/8D in CM-379, price complete with album \$7.50.

Here, we have just the opposite of the above, a set which is in such perfect proportion that each hearing brings out new beauties. The exquisite balance between the strings and the horns will give great joy to the listener. This is also a "first" in the sense that we now have this work in its entirety. There have been many and sundry versions of the third movement (Menuetto), but we are sure that no matter how much you have enjoyed this movement before your pleasure will be increased many fold by the correct one.

These *Divertimentos* were composed for social occasions, as a background for conversation and conviviality.

We have no hesitancy in recommending this well played and excellently recorded work.

Mozart: Romance in A-flat Major, Anh. 205. See **Mozart: Sonata in C Major, K. 330.**

Mozart: Serenade (Don Giovanni). See reverse side of **Busen: Sonatina—"Ad Usum infantis."**

Mozart: Serenade No. 6 in D Major (Serenata notturna) K.239. The Adolf Busch Chamber Players conducted by Adolf Busch. 4 sides, 2-10" imported discs, Nos. G-DA1673/4, price \$4.00 the pair.

This interesting and charming work was written at Salzburg in 1775. The orchestration is curious in that the players are divided into two groups—the one a string quartet with a bass instead of the usual cello, and the other a small string orchestra, without basses, but with timpani. Mozart exploits with charming effect the possibilities of light and shade which the unusual combination of instruments afford.

We had a very good recording of this work on BAM-23 played by the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra directed by Fendler, but his reading on one 12" disc, does not measure up to the present version. The Boyd Neel String Orchestra (D-25623/4) have a good version too. The expertness of Busch and his players give us a neater and clearer presentation of the music, and bring out the interplay of the two instrumental groups.

The delicacy and artistry of the recording and interpretation will commend these two discs to you.

Mozart: Sonata in C Major, K. 330 (3 sides) & Romance in A-flat Major, Anh. 205. (1 side). Edwin Fischer (piano). 2-12" imported discs, Nos. G-DB3424/5, price \$5.00 the pair.

This interesting and early work of Mozart is in three movements: *Allegro moderato*; *Andante cantabile*; *Allegretto*, each taking one side. The work is of great delicacy and Fischer, in his superficial reading, does not give us nearly as good an interpretation as Harriet Cohen (CM-X20) despite the very poor recording of her playing. The *Romance* is another of those delicate gems of great beauty which Mozart dedicated in this instance to a Mme. Lefebvre.

The recorders have captured Fischer's well played reading with fidelity and the piano tone is exceptionally good.

Neubauer: Adagio for Flute and Viola. Marcel Moyse and Blanche Honegger & **Handel: Sonata for two Flutes.** Marcel and Louis Moyse. 12" disc, No. V-12492, price \$1.50.

Neubauer (1760-1795) was a Bohemian composer who wrote in all of the usual forms of his day. Very little of his music is known today and this is the only representation of his work on discs. It is a charming composition well played and interpreted.

On the reverse side we have a Handel Sonata for two flutes. This work fully exploits the musicianship of the two artists and is delightful to hear.

Paine: Prelude to "Odeipus Tyrannus", Op. 35. See under Collections: American Music for Orchestra.

Poulenc: Mouvements Perpétuels & Faure: Nocturne in A-flat Major, Op. 33, No. 3. Arthur Rubinstein (piano). 12" disc, No. V-15660, price \$2.00.

Another listing from this month's *Connoisseur's Corner* which is most engaging. Arthur Rubinstein plays the Poulenc *Perpetual Motions* with abandon and the reading of the *Nocturne* is one of great delicacy and charm. The recording is excellent and the pianist's tone has been captured in all of its true beauty.

RAMEAU

Rameau: Quatrième Concert—La Pantomime; L'Indiscréte; La Rameau (Pièces de Clavecin en Concert).

"Ars Rediviva" — Messrs. Ortmans-Bach and Blot (Violins) with Crussard (harpsichord). 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-12490, price \$1.50.

Rameau, Court Musician to the King of France from 1745 until his death, composed *Pièces de Clavecin en Concert* for the Royal Musicals. The works represented on this disc comprise the *Fourth Concert* and mark a great advance in the writing of chamber music for in these Concerts the instruments had equal importance.

Originally reviewed in the July 1938 *Record Supplement* from the imported pressings (G-DB5055) there is little more to be said. The playing and recording are of the best with an excellent balance between the instruments.

Rameau: Suite in E Minor. Wanda Landowska (harpsichord). 6 sides, 3-12" discs, Nos. V-15562/4 in VM-593, price complete with album \$6.50.

This Suite in E Minor is a compilation from the second volume of *Pièces de Clavecin*, published in 1724, and recorded here by Mme. Landowska. The suite consists of nine parts of which *Le Rappel des Oiseaux* and *La Villageoise* were among those which have been recorded by Ralph Kirkpatrick (MC-25). In comparing the two versions of these artists we find a slightly more forward and strong tone in the present set. The Kirkpatrick set which was played on an instrument made by Chickering under the supervision of Arnold Dolmetsch, while Landowska performs on a Pleyel, gives us a more authentic tone.

The recording of the present set is well accomplished and Mme. Landowska plays with all of her wonted artistry.

RESPIGHI

Respighi: Impression Brésiliane. Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Oswald Kabasta. 4 sides, 2-12" imported discs, Nos. G-DB4643/4, price \$5.00 the pair.

When you put these discs on your machine you will have a "premier", for as far as we can ascertain, this work has never been performed by an outstanding orchestra in an American concert hall. The first performance took place at Rio in 1928 under the direction of the composer, and it is one of the finest scores he has given us. The work is divided as follows: *Tropical Night*; *Butantan (In a Garden of Snakes near São Paulo)*; *Song and Dance*. The scoring and treatment of the themes are ingeniously contrived utilizing the full modern orchestra with its subtle shadings of tone rather than mere volume. The exotic blendings of color in the woodwind, brass and percussion are noteworthy.

The recording is one of rare beauty with a string tone of exceptional quality.

Respighi: Nebbie & Rossini: Tarantella Napoletana. Donald Dickson (baritone) with orchestra conducted by N. Finston. 10" disc, No. V-2024, price \$1.50.

The popular baritone of the air-waves and the Metropolitan makes his debut on discs with these two selections. The Respighi *Nebbie* is well sung with due thought for its emotional content. The *Tarantella* has a sprightly orchestral accompaniment. The quality of the voice is rich and has been effectively transferred to the discs.

Rosenmüller: Church Sonata in E Minor. Ortmans-Bach and Blot (violins), Marcelle de Lacour (harpsichord), Noëlie Pierront (organ) with "Ars Rediviva" conducted by Claude Crussard. 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-12489, price \$1.50.

An interesting contribution originally reviewed in the November 1938 *Record Supplement* from imported pressings (G-DB5064) this work is now available for the first time to a great majority of music lovers.

Johann Rosenmüller (c.1619-1684) was famous for his vocal works although his is remembered today only by his instrumental compositions, and more especially by the two sets of "sonatas" for two to five instruments. The second set (published in 1682), called "church" sonatas because they contained no dance movements and were written in a more serious elevated style. The figured bass "realized" by Claude Crussard gives more scope than we except but the recording and performance on this disc are superior to the early Kantorei disc which made its appearance many years back. A work of noble eloquence beautifully recorded.

Rossini: Tarantella Napoletana. See reverse side of **Respighi:** Nebbie.

Rossini: William Tell—Overture. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4 sides, 2-10" discs, Nos. V-2020/1 in VM-605, price complete with album \$3.50.

Another version to add to the long list of Tell Overtures. The interpretation is excellent but the recording is spoiled by Toscanini because of his utter disregard for the neces-

sity of changing discs. The long waits and "cut offs" do not add to anyone's artistic integrity. The tone of the orchestra is not as good as that of the Boston "Pops" in their version (VM-456), although Fiedler's reading is not quite as exciting. Our choice is still Beecham—London Philharmonic (CM-X60).

Roussel: Le Jardin Mouillé, Op. 3, No. 3, & Coeur en Peril. Pierre Bernac (tenor) with Francis Poulenc (piano). 10" disc, No. V-2011, price \$1.50.

A real Gallic treat. Two exquisite songs interpreted with consummate artistry by these artists. Bernac, who possesses a fine voice and has excellent diction, is supported by Poulenc in a disc which we highly recommend, not only for the value of the material but also for the excellence of the recording.

Schoeck: Nachruf. See reverse side of **Wolf: Auf ein altes Bild.**

Schubert: Der Jüngling und der Tod & a) Das Heimweh; b) Hin und wieder fliegen Pfeile; c) Liebe schwärmt auf allen Wegen. Elisabeth Schumann (soprano) with Leo Rosenek (piano). 12" imported disc, No. G-DB3600, price \$2.50.

This disc of Mme. Schumann will rank among her best. The finest performance on the disc is that of *Der Jüngling und der Tod*, which is sung with perfection. *Das Heimweh* and *Hin und wieder* are new to discs and are given a noteworthy performance here. An outstanding disc for the Lieder enthusiast.

Schubert: Im Abendrot & Franz: Im Herbst, Op. 17, No. 6. Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) and Edwin McArthur (piano). 12" disc, No. V-15645, price \$2.00.

Two popular songs from Mme. Flagstad's concert repertoire. Both are well sung and recorded with a good balance between the voices and the piano. *Im Herbst* is better suited to the soprano's heroic style.

Schubert: Symphony No. 9, in C Major. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 12 sides, 6-12" discs. Nos. V-12498/503 in VM-602, price complete with album \$9.00.

"A quantity of old music, valued at ten florins," and out of it comes these magnificent pages discovered by Schumann. A year after the discovery of this, *The Great C Major*, which has until recently been known as the 7th., Schumann wrote to his wife Clara: "Today I was in a bliss. A symphony of Schubert's was rehearsed. If only you had been there! It is indescribable; all the instruments are human voices and immeasurably spirited—and this instrumentation, pace Beethoven—these heavenly lengths, like a novel in four volumes." This new recording is superior to the version of the B.B.C. Orchestra under Sir Adrian Boult (VM-268), from both the interpretative and the technical sides. Walter not only keeps the orchestra together better, which due to his more buoyant rhythm brings out the detail more clearly, but he also builds his climaxes in a better manner.

A Connoisseur's Corner listing, which should enjoy great popularity due to the superb playing and recording.

Schumann: Symphony No. 4 in D Minor, Op. 120. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 6 sides, 3-12" imported discs, Nos. G-DB-3793/5, price \$7.50 the set.

Originally composed in 1841, and finished for Clara Schumann's Birthday on September 13th. Shortly afterwards it was performed publically as the 2nd Symphony, but withdrawn and newly orchestrated appearing ten years later as the 4th. Sir Donald Tovey in his *Essays in Musical Analysis*, Vol. 2, suggests that Schumann was driven to the revision by inadequate players who could not master their parts. The movements are: *Introduction (Andante)* leading to *Allegro*; *Romanze*; *Scherzo and Trio*; and *Finale*, directed to be played without a break. The performance and recording are excellent. The detail of the instrumentation is captured with clarity and a fine balance makes this a very desirable set.

Sibelius: Malinconia, Op. 20. Louis Jensen (cello) and Galina Werschenskaya (piano). 2 sides, 12" imported disc, No. G-DB5223, price \$2.50.

Here we have an interesting and striking work for cello and piano recorded for the first time that no admirer of Sibelius can afford to overlook. The mood is very dark and of great emotional and dramatic intensity.

The recording is first rate and the spirited performance by these two artists puts this disc on the preferred list of Sibelius works which are available for the gramophile.

Smetana: Die Verkaufte Braut—Overture. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 2 sides, 12" imported disc, No. G-DB3652, price \$2.50.

The recording and reading of this overture is the best we have heard; a real bite to the strings and unusually good dynamic contrasts gives us a really stirring performance. The *Bartered Bride* is on the current list of revivals at the Metropolitan this season and we call your attention to the really fine recording, in the original Czech, by the National Opera Company of Prague in VM-193.

Smith, John Christopher: Miniature Suite (freely transcribed by Harl McDonald) & Boyce: The Power of Music—Overture. Arthur Fiedler's Sinfonietta. 4 sides 2-10" discs. Nos. V-4443/4 in VM-609, price complete with album \$2.50.

Smith (born Schmidt) was amanuensis to the great Handel in his later years. He is represented on discs for the first time by this suite, which is divided as follows: *Prelude*; *Air*; and *Allemande*. The work is distinctly Handelian in style and Mr. MacDonald has given us an excellent transcription. The Boyce *Power of Music* is another work typical of that period, and also makes its debut on discs.

The playing and recording are all that one could ask for and Mr. Fiedler and his men have given us a delightful contribution.

R. Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier—Waltzes. Saxon State Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm, 2 sides, 12" imported disc, No. G-DB4557, price \$2.50.

The arranger of the waltz movements on this disc is not mentioned but before we go any further we give him a vote of thanks for introducing some of the less frequently heard tunes and eliminating some of the beautiful but overworked Act 2 finale.

This stimulating arrangement is superbly played and recorded. The conductor and his men evidently enjoyed making this disc:—it is *Sehr lustig*.

Veracini: Sonata (Violin and Piano) in E Minor (arr. J. Salmon). Jacques Thibaud and Tasso Janopoulo. 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-15568, price \$2.00.

This sprightly sonata by the teacher of the famous Tartini is in three movements: *Gigue*; *Minuet*; *Gavotte*, and has been available on imported pressings (G-DB3111) for quite some time. This recording, made in Tokyo and pressed from an autographed master, is delightful in every respect. The superb tone of Thibaud is captured with the greatest fidelity and the accompanying piano part is played with great artistry.

Verdi: Simone Boccanegra—Recit: Dinne alcum; Aria—Figlia, tal nome paplita—Act II & Recit: Plebe, Patrisi; Aria—Piangi su voi—Act III. Lawrence Tibbett (baritone), Rose Bampton (soprano), Leonard Warren (baritone), Giovanni Martinelli (tenor), Robert Nicholson (baritone) with Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera House conducted by Wilfred Pelletier. 12" disc, No. V-15642, price \$2.00.

Victor's first major vocal recording, to be made in the U. S. A. in quite some time is technically excellent. The balance between the voices and the orchestra and the fidelity with which they have been captured are truly remarkable. However, this excellence is marred for us because of the poor choice of the artist for the role of Maria. Miss Bampton (Mrs. Pelletier) was an excellent mezzo, but her voice as a soprano has lost its beautiful quality in the high register. She is always just under the tone, and this is picked up by the microphone and spoils our aural pleasure. Of the two scenes recorded, the baritone solo from the Act III ensemble has been done before on T-F1160 by Hans Reinmar. However, discounting this, we have two "firsts". The part of Simone is one of Tibbett's best, and rest of the cast are excellent. But, for Maria and a slight flirtation with the pitch in the ensemble this would be a perfect disc.

Vitali: Chaconne (arr. Charlier). Jacques Thibaud (violin) and Tasso Janopoulo (piano). 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-15465, price \$2.00.

This "hardy annual" of the violin repertoire is recorded here by Thibaud and Janopoulo in a version which will hold its own not only for interpretation but also as recorded violin tone for quite some time to come. There have been two other versions of this work; D'Aranyi (C-7289M)

and Milstein (CM-X61), but neither of them can compare with the present sumptuous disc of these two artists. Thibaud and his excellent collaborator have been recorded in a most life-like manner and no violin student can afford to overlook this excellent interpretation.

VIVALDI

Vivaldi: Concerto in D Minor, Op. 3, No. 11 (arr. Bach — Cortot). (3 sides) & Schumann: Fantasie-stucke, Op. 12.—No. 1, Des Abends. (1 side). Alfred Cortot (piano). 2-12" discs, Nos. V-15463/4 in VM-573, price complete with album \$4.50.

This Vivaldi *Concerto da Camera in D Minor* was, due to mistaken identity, attributed to Bach because of the inscription over the signature of W. F. Bach, *manu mei patris descriptum* (written by the hand of my father). Originally the eleventh from the *concerti grossi* of Op. 3 known as *L'estro armonico*, J. S. Bach arranged it for Organ and from this Cortot has made the present arrangement for piano. There are three movements: *Praeludium*; *Sicilienne*; *Toccata*, each taking one side of a disc. Cortot's arrangement has been well accomplished; the essential antiquity has been preserved, and the melodies have not been obscured by ornamentation.

The playing of this work by Cortot is all that one could wish for, a crisp tone and unfailing technique place this set among the best not only for execution but also for recorded tone. *Des Abends* is more wistful in mood and here Cortot plays with poetry and a beautiful legato tone.

Vivaldi: Sonata (Violin) in D Minor, Op. 2, No. 3. (Realized by C. Crussard). Dominique Blot (violin) and Claude Crussard (piano). 2 sides, 12" disc, No. V-12491, price \$1.50.

Originally reviewed in the July 1938 Record Supplement from the imported pressing (G-DB5056) we find little more to be said other than we would have preferred a harpsichord to the present piano. The interpretation and recording are excellent.

Williams: Greensleeves—Fantasias & Foulds: Keltic Lament. The Jacques Orchestra conducted by Reginald Jacques. 12" disc, No. C-69735D, price \$1.50.

Two bright little "salon" pieces well played by a small orchestra.

Wolf: Auf ein altes Bild. & Schoeck: Nachruf. Karl Erb (tenor) and Bruno Seidler-Winkler (piano). 2 sides, 10" imported disc, No. G-DA4448, price \$2.00.

This little disc gives us two songs sung with great artistry by Erb. *Auf ein altes Bild* has been done in the Wolf Society—Vol. V by Herbert Jansen while the Schoeck song is a first recording.

Woodforde-Finden: Indian Love Lyrics. Nelson Eddy (baritone) with orchestra. 4 sides, 2-10" discs, Nos. C-17161/2D, in CM-X150, price complete with album \$2.50.

A complete recording of the popular Indian Love Lyrics beautifully sung by Nelson Eddy who makes his debut on the Columbia label.

The four songs are: No. 1, *The Temple Bells* & No. 2, *Less Than The Dust* (C-17161D); No. 3, *Kashmiri Song* & No. 4, *Till I Awake* (C-17162D).

The recording is excellent with a good balance between the voice and the orchestra.

COLLECTIONS

American Music for Orchestra. Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hansen. 8 sides, 4-12" discs, Nos. V-15656/9 in VM-608, price complete with album \$8.00.

The following selections, of which three are new to discs, comprise this album:

Chadwick: Jubilee (No. 1 from "Symphonic Sketches Suite") (V-15656)

McDowell: Dirge (from Suite No. 2 "Indian") Op. 48 (V-15657)

Paine: Oedipus Tyrannus, Op. 35—Prelude (V-15658)

Kennan: Night Soliloquy & Griffes: The White Peacock, Op. 7, No. 1 (from "Roman Sketches") (V-15659)

These discs mark the gramophonic debut of the Eastern-Rochester Symphony. The organization is well known to the radio listeners and these discs show off their many good points. The compositions of Chadwick, Paine, and Kennan are recorded for the first time and the last two composers are names new to the lists. All of the works are in a strict sense program music, and with the exception of *Night Soliloquy* of the late nineteenth century romantic school.

In making comparisons with the CBS Symphony under Howard Barlow's direction we find that neither *The Dirge* nor *The White Peacock* of the present set are as well played or recorded as on those discs. Mr. Barlow's readings of these selections are to be preferred from both the artistic and recording point of view.

The recording of this set has been well accomplished and there is a good balance between the various choirs with some excellent ensemble playing.

Music of Chávez: Sinfonia India (3 sides); **Sinfonia de Antigona** (3 sides); **Buxtehude: Chaconne in E Minor** (orchestrated by Chávez) (2 sides). Symphony Orchestra of Mexico conducted by Carlos Chávez. 8 sides, 4-12" discs, Nos. V-12337/40 in VM-503, price complete with album \$6.50.

The *Sinfonia India* was composed by Chávez during a visit to the United States in December 1935 and performed for the first time in a broadcast performance, January 23, 1936. There are three Indian melodies used in this score: one each of the Seris (of Sonora), the Huicholes (of Nayarit), and the Yaquis (of Sonora). These melodies were chosen because they struck the composer as forming a unity. This

is a symphony in three movements played without a pause. The scoring, in addition to the usual instruments calls for Indian drums, a water-gourd, various rasps (such as the güiro), rattles, cymbals and timpani.

Sinfonia de Antigona (1933), was first performed at Robin Hood Dell, Philadelphia, under the direction of Iturbi, July 19, 1934. Originally written as incidental music for a performance of Sophocles' Antigone in the "contracted" form of Jean Cocteau, it was later rewritten for full orchestra in its present form. The composer has made use of rhythmic, harmonic, and melodic elements essential to the early theory of Greek music. The work has the basic structure of the sonata, and is strictly a symphony, though in one movement.

Chávez in his treatment of the Buxtehude *Chaconne in E Minor*, has preserved as far as possible the organ-like tone so necessary to a complete realization of this type of music. A truly remarkable orchestration without any of the "celebrated theatrical tricks" so highly acclaimed in orchestrations by a lionized conductor of a celebrated orchestra. The playing of the Symphony Orchestra of Mexico, as set forth on these discs, is commendable. There is a good body of tone, and the various choirs are well balanced. However, since this is a studio recording, the tone of the orchestra is somewhat deadened, and we hope that from this good beginning we shall soon be able to list more recordings of the Orchestra and its excellent conductor.

LILY PONS IN SONG.

Lily Pons in Song. Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Andre Kostelanetz, with Frances Blaisdell (flute), and Frank La Forge (piano). 8 sides, 3-10" and 1-12" discs, Nos. V-1905, 1918, 1997 & 15610, price complete with album \$6.50.

This curious collection from Miss Pons repertoire consists of the following:

Benedict: La Caperina & Debussy: Green (No. 5 from *Arlettes Oubliées*); **Mandoline** (V-1905)

Hue: A des Oiseaux; Laidow: Une Tabatière à Musique & Liszt: Comment Disaient-ils? V-1918)

Fauré: Les Roses d'Ispahan, Op. 39, No. 4 & Delibes: Les Filles de Cadix (V-1997)

Strauss: Le Beau Danube Bleu, Op. 314 & Dell'Acqua: Villanelle (V-15610)

We can, unfortunately, find little to recommend favorably in this collection. Miss Pons' vocal estate is not as good as it was on her debut in 1931, nor is her production as fluid. The care with which the very simple cadenzas are executed and the colorless tone make us wonder if the days of the great coloratura art are passed. Another point of disapprobation is the inclusion of songs which call for a distinctly warm lyrical voice and suffer so that they become mere shells of themselves.

The accompaniments are excellent.

The Best of the New Imported and Domestic POPULAR RECORDS

VOCAL RECORDS

Tito Schipa (tenor) with Orchestra conducted by D. Olivieri.

Vivere & Nostalgia (both from Appia film "Vivere"). 10" V-2023, \$1.50.

Kenny Baker (tenor) with Orchestra conducted by N. Finston.

South Of The Border & Stop Kicking My Heart Around. 10" V-26373, 75c.

Maxine Sullivan with Orchestra.

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Hildegarde—Noel Coward Songs.

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